

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 196843

FOR SIMONS FROM SCHMIDT

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OGEN

SUBJECT: OFFICIAL-INFORMAL

1. CAT REPORT. LATE LAST WEEK CA BUREAU REPRESENTATIVES MET WITH EUR/EX TO REVIEW THE RESULTS OF THE RECENT CAT (CONSULAR ASSISTANCE TEAM) VISIT TO BUCHAREST. (EUR/EX WAS NOT AWARE BEFOREHAND OF THE FAR-REACHING NATURE OF CA'S COMMENTS AND THUS DID NOT REQUEST THAT EUR/EE ALSO PARTICIPATE IN THE MEETING.)

2. WE UNDERSTAND THAT CA REVIEWED THE CONTENTS OF THE CAT REPORT TO THE AMBASSADOR (THEIR MEMO OF JULY 14, 1978, ENTITLED: "GENERAL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS"), AND ALSO DESCRIBED A SERIES OF ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS RELATED TO CONSULAR OPERATIONS THEY BELIEVE EXIST IN BUCHAREST WHICH WERE NOT COVERED IN THE CAT'S WRITTEN REPORT. CA INFORMED EUR/EX THAT THEY UNDERSTAND EMBASSY BUCHAREST INDICATED TO CONFIDENTIAL

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THE CAT THAT THE EMBASSY WILL TAKE NO RPT NO ACTION WITH RESPECT TO THE CAT REPORT UNTIL TT HEARS FROM EUR. CA REQUESTED EUR'S SUPPORT IN URGING EMBASSY BUCHAREST TO IMPLEMENT THE CAT'S RECOMMENDATIONS AND ALSO OUR SUPPORT IN OTHERWISE WORKING WITH CA TO REMEDY OTHER PROBLEMS THEY

PERCEIVE IN BUCHAREST WITH RESPECT TO THE CONSULAR SECTION.

3. WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE EXISTING PHYSICAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CONSULAR SECTION ARE FAR FROM SATISFACTORY. THIS, OBVIOUSLY, WAS THE PRIMARY REASON FOR THE DECISION WHICH WAS ORIGINALLY MADE BY THE EMBASSY SEVERAL YEARS AGO TO MOVE THE CONSULATE INTO THE NEW ANNEX. RECOGNIZING THAT CAT RECOMMENDATIONS ARE MADE PRIMARILY FROM CA PERSPECTIVES, WE ARE RELUCTANT TO COMMENT UNTIL WE HAVE YOUR VIEWS FROM OVERALL INTERESTS OF MISSION. WE REQUEST, THEREFORE, THAT YOU REVIEW THIS MESSAGE WITH THE AMBASSADOR AND ALL RELEVANT SECTIONS OF THE EMBASSY AND THEN SUBMIT YOUR VIEWS AND COMMENTS ASAP. (INCIDENTALLY, WE ARE COORDINATING CLOSELY WITH EUR/EX ON THIS ENTIRE QUESTION AND THEY HAVE REVIEWED THIS MESSAGE IN DRAFT. PAUL BOFINGER, WHO IS IN CHARGE OF POST MANAGEMENT IN EUR/EX, HAS ALREADY ALERTED MIKE O'BRIEN BY PHONE TO EUR'S NEED FOR THE EMBASSY'S VIEWS). PERHAPS, FOR EASE IN DEALING WITH CA, IT WOULD BE BEST FOR THE EMBASSY TO SUBMIT ITS COMMENTS ON THE CAT REPORT OF JULY 14 BY OPEN CHANNEL MESSAGE. (EUR/EX HAS INFORMED CA THAT WE ARE SEEKING THE EMBASSY'S VIEWS.) YOU MAY WISH TO SUPPLEMENT YOUR REPORT WITH BACKGROUND, ETC., TO EUR/EE VIA O-I CHANNEL. ALSO, WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR COMMENTS IN WHICHEVER MANNER YOU FEEL MOST COMFORTABLE ON THE ADDITIONAL CAT COMMENTS AS SPELLED OUT IN PARA 5 BELOW.

4. THE CAT JULY 14 REPORT APPEARS TO CONTAIN AN INCONSISTENT
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TENCY IN STRONGLY RECOMMENDING RECONSIDERATION OF THE ALLOCATION OF SPACE IN THE NEW ANNEX TO THE CONSULAR SECTION WHILE AT THE SAME TIME CALLING FOR "THE EARLIEST OCCUPANCY OF THE NEW FACILITY". CAT EXPLAINS THIS BY INDICATING THEY HAVE NO OBJECTION TO TEMPORARY MOVE OF CONSULAR SECTION TO SOLVE SHORT RANGE WORKING CONDITION PROBLEMS, BUT CONTENTS ANNEX DOES NOT OFFER SOUND PERMANENT SOLUTION. ANOTHER POINT ON WHICH WE NEED YOUR EXPLANATION IS THE TIMING FOR THE MOVE. ACCORDING TO CAT, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THE CONSULAR SECTION CAN MOVE INTO THE ANNEX IN SEPTEMBER. HOWEVER, CAT BELIEVES THAT THE EARLIEST THE MOVE COULD BE MADE WOULD BE DECEMBER, AND THAT IT MORE LIKELY WILL ENTAIL A DELAY OF ANYWHERE FROM NINE MONTHS TO A YEAR.

5. FOLLOWING ARE ADDITIONAL ISSUES RAISED BY CA DURING LAST WEEK'S SESSION WITH EUR/EX: (A) THE CAT FOUND SERIOUS DEFICIENCIES IN SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS IN THE CONSULATE, STATING FOR EXAMPLE THAT LITTLE OR NO ATTEMPT IS MADE TO MAINTAIN THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF VISA FILES VIS-A-VIS TO THE LOCAL EMPLOYEES. (B) THE CAT BELIEVES THAT OFFICE PROCEDURES CAN BE IMPROVED TO REDUCE THE

AMOUNT OF OVERTIME WORKED BY ALL OF THE AMERICAN AND LOCAL STAFF. THEY NOTED THAT SUGGESTIONS MADE BY THE CAT DURING THEIR VISIT RESULTED IN THE WAITING ROOM BEING CLEARED AT LEAST ONE HOUR EARLIER THAN THE NORM, AND HOPED THAT EMBASSY WOULD CONTINUE TO USE RECOMMENDED PROCEDURES. (C) THE CAT RECOMMENDS IMMEDIATE ATTENTION BE GIVEN TO PROVIDING ADDITIONAL STAFFING FOR THE CONSULATE, WITH THE FOLLOWING DESCENDING ORDER OF PRIORITY:

- AMERICAN SECRETARY/CONSULAR ASSISTANT;
- ADDITIONAL LOCAL EMPLOYEE (S);
- A PIT EMPLOYEE; AND
- AN ADDITIONAL AMERICAN OFFICER.

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(D) THE CAT IS CONCERNED BY WHAT IT PERCEIVES AS AN OVERLY LENIENT APPLICATION OF US VISA LAWS AND REGULATIONS BY THE CONSULATE. (E) THE CAT BELIEVES THAT THE CONSULAR SECTION HAS NOT RECEIVED SUFFICIENT SUPPORT FROM THE EMBASSY AS A WHOLE. THEY CITED AS EXAMPLES THEIR VIEW THAT CONSULTATIONS WITH THE CONSULATE CONCERNING THE MOVE TO THE ANNEX WERE NOT ADEQUATE, AND THAT EMBASSY MANAGEMENT IS NOT SYMPATHETIC TO THE CONSULATE'S NEED FOR TEMPORARY HELP FROM PERSONNEL IN OTHER SECTIONS OF THE EMBASSY.

6. WE UNDERSTAND THAT LOU MANGIAFICO IS NOW HERE IN THE STATES ON LEAVE, AND THAT HE WILL BE IN THE DEPARTMENT FOR THREE DAYS OF CONSULTATIONS STARTING AUGUST 10. WE WILL BE CONTACTING HIM AS WELL TO GET HIS VIEWS ON THE ISSUES WHICH HAVE BEEN RAISED.

7. FBO HAS RECENTLY CREATED THE NEW POSITION OF "ASSISTANT AREA OFFICER FOR EASTERN EUROPE". FBO WILL SHORTLY PROPOSE THAT THE NEW INCUMBENT, NANCY DI GUMBIA, VISIT BUCHAREST AND SEVERAL OTHER EE POSTS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. YOU WILL SHORTLY GET A CABLE REGARDING HER VISIT AND PROPOSED DATES FOR BUCHAREST OF AUGUST 14-16. FBO HAS BEEN ASKED TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE CONSULATE MOVE QUESTION ON A CONSULTANT BASIS, AND ALSO WILL TAKE OVER

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SHORT-TERM LEASE AS OF OCTOBER FIRST. THUS, IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE IF WE COULD HAVE YOUR RESPONSE(S) ON THIS ISSUE IN TIME FOR US TO DISCUSS WITH CA AND FBO BEFORE HER DEPARTURE. VANCE

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